



COVATION LLC ANNOUNCES 913 NEW JOBS IN HICKORY

HICKORY –Covation LLC, a high-end customer support center for business telecommunications services, has selected Hickory for a project that will create 913 technical support, billing, and customer service jobs over the next three years with an investment of approximately \$6.2 million over five years. The Covation facility will occupy the recently developed ADEVCO facility in McDonald Crossings Business Park located in Hickory at the intersection of Tate Boulevard and McDonald Parkway. Operations are scheduled to begin in April 2009 with 544 employees by 2009 year-end.

“This is a great way to end the year,” said Gov. Mike Easley. “Even during these difficult economic times, the foundation we have laid with smart, targeted investments is paying off, and companies continue to find opportunities in our state.”

Covation is a privately held company based in Atlanta. The 913 jobs to be created will be the company’s first in North Carolina, and will pay an overall average of \$34,500 a year, not including benefits. That is higher than the Catawba County annual average wage of \$33,300. The announcement was made possible in part by a \$600,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund.

“We are delighted with the support of both state and local officials to bring this large employment opportunity to Hickory,” said Covation Vice President for Community Affairs Joseph J. Sanders. “We look forward to being an active member of the business community for many years to come.”

“It all begins with good quality jobs, and this announcement of 913 quality jobs for Hickory and Hickory Metro citizens should go a long, long way toward our recovery,” said Hickory Mayor Rudy Wright. “We are very appreciative to everyone that has had a hand in this announcement, from the City Council’s effort to assist in the building of the facility Covation is going into, and Covation’s commitment to create these jobs, and everybody in between. This is a wonderful thing for the City of Hickory.”

"We are very excited about this announcement by Covation and the quality of the jobs they are creating for Catawba County citizens," said Kitty Barnes, Chair of the Catawba County Commissioners, "providing back-office support services for business customers further diversifies our economic base, and provides hundreds of well-paying jobs. We thank all who have been involved with this project, from the Company back to our FORESIGHT committee which supported the need to diversify into back-office jobs."

“We’ve been working to further diversify our economy with quality back-office support jobs that can help smooth some of the turbulence our economy is facing. With Covation’s announcement, we’ll begin seeing rapid job creation beginning in Spring 2009,” Julie Pruett, Director of Recruitment for the Catawba County Economic Development Corporation, said regarding the announcement. “The company plans to be a leader in business services from the Hickory market, and, judging by the wage and benefits package, they will be a great employer.”

For more information about employment opportunities at Covation, email jobs@covation.com or call (877) 547-5764.